

President's Corner Balancing Act

by Janet Millenson

Let's talk about conservation again. Wait, don't turn the page! I know it's more fun to contemplate the highlights of fall migration and to plan for the coming Christmas Bird Count season. But unless we all act to protect the environment, there won't be very many migrating or resident birds to tally. You say your favorite woods, wetlands, or weedy fields seem oddly empty in recent years? Sure, maybe the birds have gone elsewhere . . . or maybe there's no satisfactory "elsewhere" left for them to go.

Sometimes it's obvious that the balance of nature has been thrown off. We're all familiar with the barren understory (and ruined gardens) caused by uncontrolled numbers of deer and rabbits. Coyotes are on the rebound in the mid-Atlantic, but it will take years before they have a noticeable effect on prey populations.

Sometimes the relationships are not so clear. Might the continued decline in insect-eating neotropical migrants, bats, and amphibians be a factor in the spread of West Nile Virus and other insect-borne diseases?

Unfortunately, some people find it hard to look at the big picture. *The Washington Post* recently printed a letter to the editor that advocated increased oil drilling in Alaska and off the California coast as a way to keep gas

(President's Corner continues on page 3)



The Maryland Yellowthroat

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AN OPPORTUNITY TO WEIGH IN: LEGISLATION THAT ENDANGERS ENDANGERED SPECIES

Between September 19 and 29, the so-called Threatened and Endangered Species Recovery Act of 2005 (H.R. 3824) sped through the House of Representatives, where it was approved by a margin of 229 to 193. It now awaits action in the Senate, timetable unknown.

This bill has drawn heavy criticism from environmental groups, wildlife enthusiasts, and scientists, who contend that it would dismantle existing protections for endangered species. Since its passage in 1973, the Endangered Species Act has been responsible for saving many species from extinction, including the Bald Eagle, Whooping Crane, and Northern Spotted Owl.

According to the American Bird Conservancy, among its most disturbing changes, H.R. 3824:

- eliminates the Critical Habitat designation, which sets aside both land currently occupied by an endangered species and areas that can be restored to allow for future recovery and range expansion for listed species. (Close to home, this involves the horseshoe-crab-breeding area of the Delaware Bay, critical to the *rufa* subspecies of the Red Knot, whose population has plummeted over the past 20 years from 100,000 to 13,000.)
- eliminates oversight by endangered species experts at the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service in the registering of hazardous pesticides;

- allows political appointees to unilaterally overturn science-based decisions; and
- threatens to bankrupt the budget of the Endangered Species Act by forcing the government to compensate developers for the most expensive *potential* land use thwarted by the presence of an endangered species. David Curson, Audubon MD-DC, adds, "There is no requirement that the proposed activity be more than speculative, and there is no limit on the number of times a developer can receive compensation for different proposed activities on his or her land."

Assorted conservation groups are mobilizing to ensure that the legislation that emerges from the Senate will strengthen rather than weaken the existing Endangered Species Act. Two organizations that will be tracking the status of the bill are the American Bird Conservancy (abc@abcbirds.org) and Audubon MD-DC (dcursion@audubon.org).

A link to The Endangered Species Act of 1973:

<http://www.fws.gov/endangered/esa.html>

A link to H.R. 3824:

<http://thomas.loc.gov/cgi-bin/thomas>

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BLOCKBUSTING: COMMANDO ATLASING

BY WALTER ELLISON

"After the first year's field work had shown the areas where coverage was likely to be thin, attempts were made to fill gaps by short, intensive visits."—J.T.R. Sharrock in *The Atlas of Breeding Birds in Britain and Ireland, 1976*.

With these characteristically understated words, Tim Sharrock introduced the concept of blockbusting (*square-bashing* to our counterparts "across the pond"), in the first published large-scale breeding bird atlas. In an ideal world, all atlas blocks would be monitored by observers who live in them or who could easily reach them. The world is not ideal, of course; some blocks go wanting because the area has few birders, while some blocks, like the wallflower at a ball, just don't seem attractive. But because the goal of a breeding bird atlas is complete and adequate coverage, empty blocks must somehow receive their due.

A blockbust is a survey, lasting one to several days, of an atlas block's birds by observers who travel to reach the block (often quite far). The perfect

blockbust would include a point count survey (in Maryland this would be a miniroute), two trips to the block a week apart, and a night visit with an owl and nightjar recording. In practice, a minimal blockbust could be limited to a single day's visit. However, coordinators at all levels do their utmost to minimize "one-day blocks," covered in six to ten hours, because these blocks will inevitably be missing many probable and confirmed nesting records and a great many scarce and inconspicuous birds.

What characterizes a block that needs busting? One major factor is remoteness from the haunts of most birders. A second feature is a perception that the block is unattractive, for birds and birders. This can have many causes: The block could be in a highly urbanized area, perhaps even perceived as dangerously crime-ridden. Many blocks appear to lack sufficient habitat range to host a good diversity of birds. Some blocks simply lie within birding terra incognita. Finally, some blocks run afoul of birding parochialism because they straddle a state line. In Maryland, we strive to cover entire blocks regardless of the amount of territory in them that lies in an adjacent state. Many state-line blocks have gone begging. These blocks need coverage—and those along the Mason-Dixon Line offer the added bonus of contributing sightings to the second *Pennsylvania Breeding Bird Atlas*, now in progress. (The link for Pennsylvania regional coordinators is <http://www.carnegiemnh.org/atlas/delorme.htm>.)

The 2002-2006 Maryland and District of Columbia Breeding Bird Atlas enjoyed such superior coverage through the first three years that there was no real need to hire blockbusters. Instead, we relied on county coordinators to organize trips into empty blocks and to run atlas trips at MOS conferences; several dedicated observers have volunteered for blocks in places far from their homes.

Over the winter of 2004-2005, the Breeding Bird Atlas Committee determined that enough empty blocks still needed coverage to justify hiring paid blockbusters. We advertised for blockbusters beginning in late February and hired six people to blockbust this summer. Two were at-large blockbusters sent all around the state, while four others concentrated on smaller areas closer to their homes.

The Atlas Committee will again be hiring blockbusters for our final field season in 2006. If anyone in MOS feels he or she has the qualifications to cover blocks in all parts of the state next summer, please get in touch with State Coordinator Walter Ellison (rossgull@baybroadband.net, 410-778-9568, 23460 Clarissa Rd, Chestertown, MD 21620).

In 2005 our "hired guns" did a mix of pure blockbusts and miniroutes, largely in blocks with 30 or fewer bird species. More than 66 blocks were covered by blockbusters from late May to mid-July. Because of the efforts of county coordinators, our most active observers, and the diligent blockbusters, we now have fewer than 25 empty atlas blocks. This allows us to concentrate on improving totals in blocks with low species totals and those lacking night birds.* We will have a completed atlas next year. It is largely up to the members of MOS to ensure that we make it an excellent atlas. Please do not let your enthusiasm or determination flag; the end is in sight.

* I encourage birders, and Chapters, to consider making a concerted effort early next year (starting in late December for Great Horned Owls) to locate territorial night birds. We currently have a long way to go to match the maps generated for night birds, including American Woodcock, in the first atlas, published in the 1980s.

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Anyone is welcome to contribute articles or ideas that would be of interest to other birders. Copy may be mailed or e-mailed to Lydia Schindler by November 18, 2005 for the January/February 2006 issue.

Illustrations on pages 1, 3, 8, 11, and 13
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DNR Reports... by Glenn Therres

Government agencies are always receiving public input, solicited or otherwise. We hold public hearings, meetings, and workshops to gather opinions on numerous topics, such as hunting seasons, regulation changes, and management changes on DNR lands. With the popularity of the Internet, we now acquire public input via our web page. Of course, there is always the old-fashioned telephone call. We get lots of those.

Another mechanism that DNR uses to solicit public input is the advisory commission and advisory committee. Many of our state parks and forests have citizen advisory committees that review proposed land management plans and their implementation. Every county has a forestry board that encourages sound forest management and reviews public and private timber plans. Various watershed groups and Chesapeake Bay groups keep DNR apprised of those issues.

There are also a few Governor-appointed advisory commissions that represent the interested and affected publics for a given DNR responsibility, and that review DNR programs and provide advice. Examples include the Wildlife Advisory Commission, Sport Fish Advisory Commission, and Tidal Fish Advisory Commission. In our state, these commissions have no decision-making authority, as they do in some states. However, since they represent the opinions of our publics, their advice is taken seriously.

Most of these commissions have established committees that report to them on special resource topics. Committees that report to the Wildlife Advisory Commission include the Migratory Game Bird Advisory Committee, Wild Turkey Advisory Committee, and Furbearer Resources Advisory Committee. Members of these advisory committees are appointed by the Secretary of Natural Resources.

Recently, a new committee was established to provide advice on issues relating to nongame wildlife and endangered species. This new committee is called the **Wildlife Diversity Advisory Committee**. The purpose of the committee is to advise the Department on all aspects of wildlife diversity, including threatened and endangered species listings, nongame wildlife priorities and issues, implementation of the new Wildlife Diversity Conservation Plan and its periodic review, spending priorities for federal State Wildlife Grant funds, and the securing of additional funds.

The Wildlife Diversity Advisory Committee is comprised of nine individuals representing wildlife diversity conservation, wildlife science, nonconsumptive wildlife-oriented recreation (such as birdwatching), and environmental education. In addition to reporting to the Wildlife Advisory Commission, this committee will provide direct advice to DNR's Wildlife and Heritage Service.

The chairman of the committee is Tom Franklin. Mr. Franklin is the conservation director for the Izaak Walton League of America, owns a store specializing in bird-feeding, and co-chairs Maryland's Teaming with Wildlife Coalition. The other members of the advisory committee are John Byrd (Howard County Recreation and Parks), Mark Diehl (active member of the Sierra Club), Mark Haddon (Smithsonian Environmental Research Center), Rick Leader (National Audubon Society), Rich Raesly (Frostburg State University), Doug Samson (The Nature Conservancy), Joel Snodgrass (Towson University), and Chris Swarth (Jug Bay Wetlands Sanctuary). I am DNR's liaison with the committee.

These folks represent your interests, so if there are any issues you wish the advisory committee to tackle, let me know (GOTHERRES@dnr.state.md.us).

President's Corner (continued from page 1)

prices down. The writer noted sarcastically, "But we must protect the snail darter or other nonentities at consumers' expense." Let us ask in return, why should we endanger entire species and their habitats so this individual can pay less for gas?

Preserving the environment can involve difficult tradeoffs, as seen in the current controversy over wind power in Maryland. We all want to reduce pollution and decrease our reliance on non-renewable energy sources. However, erecting wind turbines on Appalachian ridge tops may not be a good solution. MOS and other groups have spoken up because we think the developers of these proposed wind energy plants haven't made a persuasive case that the benefits outweigh the risks. Giant turbines have the potential to cause great harm to wildlife, especially migrating birds and bats, while contributing very little toward the state's electricity needs. The U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service has issued excellent guidelines on evaluating the risks to wildlife, but developers aren't required to follow them. MOS believes that wind plant siting decisions must be based on properly conducted scientific studies.

Birds don't spend money, they don't vote, and they don't write letters to the editor—but we do. I know how many of you are passionate and eloquent on matters you care about. Pick an issue and lend your voice. When habitats and wildlife are threatened, individuals can make a difference.

Slowest of Snails

Because the *Yellowthroat* travels by bulk mail, it can sometimes be slow to arrive—



as members of the Montgomery Bird Club found out in September, when it took their copies an extra 2-1/2 weeks to show up. If/when this happens again, remember that, thanks to the fine collaboration of Sue Probst and Fran Saunders, you can access the *Yellowthroat* on the MOS web site. You might also try badgering the bulk mail post office in your community.

—The Editor

The Conservation Connection

By Maureen F. Harvey



Roth Rock Wind Power Project. September was a busy time for MOS members involved in Public Service Commission (PSC) hearings and testimony regarding the application by Synergics, Inc., for a Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity (CPCN) to build a wind power facility at Roth Rock, Garrett Co. MOS filed as an interested party in the case. On behalf of MOS, Carol Schreter (Baltimore Bird Club) attended hearings in Baltimore Sept. 14-16, to witness intervenor testimony by Alice Eastman, Dan Boone, and others. The three MD Department of Natural Resources scientists, when directly asked by the hearing examiner if anything in their research justifies denial of the project, each replied “yes.”

On Sept. 22, Fran Pope (Allegany Chapter) read a letter signed by MOS President Janet Millenson at the public hearing in Garrett Co. This letter, prepared jointly by Carol, Fran, and Janet, largely reflected Carol’s impressions from the previous week’s hearings.

“These hearings,” the letter said, “made it clear how much is still unknown about the potential pros and cons of installing 400-foot tall wind turbines on the Appalachian ridge tops. . . . Because wind power’s benefits and risks are site-specific, what works in the Western or Midwestern U.S. may not be relevant to the Eastern mountains. . . . We are particularly concerned about this wind plant posing unacceptable risks to wildlife through direct mortality and habitat destruction. . . . The birds and bats that use this flyway are valuable resources because they consume enormous quantities of insect pests. Yet the [nearby] Mountaineer wind plant alone is estimated to have killed 4,000 bats in just a few months. . . . Those 17 [proposed] turbines will still generate less than one-tenth of one percent of the electricity on the power grid serving Maryland. This is an insignificant amount. Much more could be saved by conservation in the public sector alone. . . . We find it disturbing that Synergics has failed to follow federal guidelines for site assessment, and has even ignored the recommendations of its own hired experts that further surveys are needed. . . . Synergics should not be rewarded for its repeated failure to collect or provide relevant information about the potential risks to wildlife of its Roth Rock project. Synergics is understandably eager to take advantage of tax incentives, but that is no excuse for ignoring federal guidelines and the advice of wildlife experts. There is still a great deal that needs to be learned about implementing wind power along the Appalachian ridges. Therefore we recommend that the Public Service Commission deny the application for a CPCN permit at this time, but encourage the applicant to follow the interim Fish and Wildlife Service guidelines and then reapply for a CPCN.”

The full text of the letter may be found via the Conservation section of the MOS web page. A few more hearings are scheduled. Keep your eyes peeled for news of the final PSC decision.

More Wind Power Issues. A couple of positive steps to bring science into wind power decisions have happened both nationally and regionally.

- The Government Accounting Office has issued a study entitled “Wind Power Impacts on Wildlife and Government Responsibilities for Regulating Development and Protecting Wildlife.” The title alone gives us some hope that things are moving in the right direction. It’s available for downloading at <http://www.gao.gov/new.items/d05906.pdf>.
- MOS President Janet Millenson spoke before the National Research Council (NRC). WV Congressmen Mollohan and Rahall successfully obtained funding for an NRC study evaluating concerns about potential impacts of industrial wind plants sited within the highlands region of the Mid-Atlantic Highlands region (MD, WV, VA and PA). We are grateful to Dan Boone for alerting MOS to the initial meeting of NRC’s panel of experts on Sept. 19 in Washington, DC. Environmental groups and wind industry representatives were invited to attend and speak during an open microphone session following presentations by the panel.

Janet reported that Dan Boone did a terrific job in a full-length presentation. The members of the committee (drawn primarily from universities around the country) seemed impressively knowledgeable and well-qualified, and they asked excellent questions. She found the session very interesting, but surprisingly she was the only person who showed up for the public comments period at the end of the day. Here’s a summary of what she said (after introducing MOS):

“MOS believes that proposed wind energy projects must be: (1) evaluated on a site-by-site basis; (2) considered in the larger context of environmental and economic effects; and (3) developed in accordance with federal guidelines and scientific protocols. Don’t assume that wind farms on Appalachian ridges will be like wind farms in California—the Eastern U.S. has very different patterns of bird migration and land use. Wind energy projects can harm local wildlife by destroying important nesting habitat and causing forest fragmentation, and wind turbines kill migrating insectivores (bats and neotropical birds) that help control agricultural pests in distant regions. Tourism may also drop off when the viewscape and the wildlife levels deteriorate. Before constructing wind turbines, developers should perform detailed multi-year studies of the potential risk to wildlife, using appropriate technologies and data sources (including information from local birding organizations). MOS supports the

committee's mission to create research-based guidelines for wind energy project siting, and hopes those guidelines can be enforced."

Dan praised Janet's statement, observing that "she is a gifted and effective public speaker, and her several minutes of comments were very well-received even though [they] came at the end of a long day of presentations. It was an interesting and somewhat hopeful meeting. I was impressed with the high caliber and insightfulness of committee members and staff."

MOS Signs on to Three ABC Letters. The MOS Executive Board and Conservation Committee unanimously agreed to sign on to the following letters initiated by the American Bird Conservancy.

1. **H.R. 518, the Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Improvement Act.** In June, ABC testified before the House Resources Subcommittee on Fisheries and Oceans, along with other conservation organizations, and included MOS in a list of organizations supportive of H.R. 518. The NMBC Act, originally endorsed by Congress in 2000, has been hugely successful in helping to conserve neotropical birds throughout the U.S., Latin America, and the Caribbean. H.R. 518 reauthorizes this important conservation legislation and makes important improvements to further strengthen the Act. The complete bill can be found at: <http://thomas.loc.gov/>.
2. **Carbofuran Risk Assessment.** In August, ABC wrote to support this very strongly worded risk assessment prepared by the Environmental Protection Agency, so that the Administration will take this effort to ban the pesticide seriously. ABC's letter said, in part, "We strongly agree with the conclusion of the report that 'there are no legal uses of carbofuran that will not result in mortality of wild birds' and find this and other conclusions of the report very disturbing, and therefore call upon the U.S. EPA to immediately suspend or cancel all registered uses of carbofuran."
3. **American birds sold in European pet trade.** In September, ABC and other conservation organizations wrote to Stavros Dimas, European Commissioner for the Environment. The letter states, in part, "While our songbirds enjoy protections...under the U.S. Migratory Bird Treaty Act, these same birds are harvested in large numbers when they move beyond our borders. . . . Many tens of thousands of birds [are] imported to the European Union each year. Although some species might sustain this trade for a short time, many more cannot. . . . Buntings, cardinals, orioles, tanagers, and many other neotropical migrants are . . . readily available in pet markets across Europe. . . . neotropical migrants have

declined dramatically in recent decades, including the Painted Bunting and other species sought after by traders. Collectively our organizations invest millions of conservation dollars each year to help reverse these declines. We are concerned that our efforts on behalf of many songbirds may be undermined by Europe's demand for wild-caught pet birds. Whether or not such trade was a major factor in the initial declines of these species, it may be a significant hindrance to their recovery. . . . The EU has made great strides in conserving the remarkable avian diversity of Europe. We ask for your support and cooperation in protecting the equally remarkable birds of the Americas, and welcome the opportunity to meet with you to discuss our concerns more fully."

Buy Your Migratory Bird Stamp Now. Carol Schreter shares this idea from Paul Baicich of Swarovski Optic: Buy a 2005-2006 Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation Stamp, commonly known as the "Duck Stamp." It costs \$15 and may be purchased from any U.S. Post Office and most National Wildlife Refuges. Since the 1930s, more than \$700 million has been raised from stamp sales, with the funding used to secure more than 5.2 million acres of valuable wetland habitat for the Refuge system. Approximately \$25 million a year is currently collected through annual stamp sales, and 98 percent of the revenue goes through the Migratory Bird Conservation Fund to purchase refuge wetlands. For the charismatic Ivory-billed Woodpecker, it's additionally significant to realize that millions of dollars of stamp revenue have already gone to Cache River and White River National Wildlife Refuges. In addition, the stamp is a bargain; it can be used to gain admission to any National Wildlife Refuge. Paul's suggestion: Don't just buy it, display it while afield!



For general information on the stamp program and for details on the current stamp, see: <http://www.fws.gov/duckstamps/Info/Stamps/stampinfo.htm> and <http://www.fws.gov/duckstamps/>.

AVIAN ENVIRONMENTALISM: WEB LINKS

Last year the Baltimore Bird Club Conservation Committee provided the MOS Conservation Committee with a list of web sites that conservation-minded birders could use to assist in web activism. We plan to update this list annually so that the MOS web site presents the best possible collection of web action links for Maryland birdwatchers.* This list can be accessed on the MOS web site at www.mdbirds.org, then click *Conservation, Earth News, Web Action Link*.

NEW RECOMMENDATIONS

Maryland League of Conservation Voters

(www.mdlcv.org): MLCV serves as the political voice of the state's environmental community by advocating for sound conservation policies, promoting environmentally responsible candidates, and holding elected officials accountable through scorecards and reports. MLCV is currently handling such issues as mercury pollution, endangered native oysters, air pollution, and the Intercounty Connector. It has a very proactive program.

Partners for Open Space (www.partnersforopenspace.org): Partners for Open Space is a statewide coalition of groups seeking to secure, save, and protect Maryland's land conservation programs. The coalition is comprised of 120-plus member groups such as Nature Conservancy and Chesapeake Bay Foundation. Their efforts fueled a public outcry that resulted in funds being restored to Maryland's Program Open Space and legislation being passed to make the sale of public lands more transparent. They continue to work on this agenda.

BirdPac (www.birdpac.org): This is a fairly new organization founded by two individuals who previously worked in the National Audubon Society's public policy office. BirdPac is a federally registered, unaffiliated, nonpartisan Political Action Committee focused on the election of lawmakers who shape environmental policy and determine the fate of bird conservation in this country. Recently they have been involved with the New Jersey and Virginia governors' races, and they are looking at candidates in House and Senate races in several states—including Maryland—who could have a big impact on our birds and their habitats. Still new and some of the website is not functioning, but the concept is good.

National Resources Defense Council (www.nrdc.org):

This environmental action organization supports online activists in protecting the planet's wildlife and wild places. The website provides information on current environmental issues, as well as tools and sample text to assist you in sending e-mail or fax messages to designated parties involved with decision-making. Current issues include an "Exxpose Exxon" campaign, getting the Navy to stop harming whales with high-intensity sonar, and encouraging Kimberly-Clark to manufacture toilet paper using recycled fiber. The website is easy to use.

OLD FAVORITES

Action Network Hub (<http://actionnetwork.org>):

ANHub is a broad-based gateway to online activism centers for leading environment, health, and population advocacy organizations.

American Bird Conservancy—Web Action Link

(www.saveourbirds.org): ABC's mission is to conserve wild birds and their habitats throughout the Americas. Their Web Action Link currently focuses on saving the Red Knot and other shorebirds from the effects of horseshoe crab over-harvesting.

Care2 Environmental Network (www.care2.com):

Care2 partnered with nonprofit organizations and eco-friendly companies to offer products and services with a "green twist." Using their search engine, Care2 provides eco-info (and info on other topics) from many nonprofit organizations. Care2 links back into BirdPac.

Environmental Activism Issues Hub

(<http://environment.about.com/od/activism>): People visit About.com for many things, including home repair and decorating ideas as well as environmental issues, avian and otherwise. About.com provides content relevant to your interests on any of these topics. If you're thinking about a fuel-efficient car, this is a good place to start.

Scorecard (www.scorecard.org): Scorecard is an information service provided by Environmental Defense as a resource for information about pollution problems and toxic chemicals in various regions of the U.S. For example, Baltimore City is listed in the top 10% of cities with the worst toxic chemical releases. Baltimore County is in the top 20%. Scorecard provides assistance in taking action.

For additional information, call Joan Cwi at 410-467-5352 or e-mail Bryce Butler at capitano.bryce@verizon.net.

—Joan Cwi

*The views represented by these web sites are not necessarily those of the BBC, MOS, or the author.

BOARD BULLETINS

From the September 10 meeting of the MOS State Board in College Park, hosted by the Patuxent Chapter

- **Publicity Committee:** Kate Tufts, who will be working with Chair Cecily Nabors, is looking for people from around the state who are willing to write publicity articles for MOS (ktufts@verizon.net).
- **Conference 2007:** Salisbury University, July 27-29.
- **New Members:** Membership Chair Linda Keenan announced that new members will receive a copy of the "Yellowbook," a \$10 coupon good for registering at the annual Conference, and a checklist of Maryland birds.
- **Updated checklists of Maryland birds:** Now available through your chapter.
- **Scholarships:** Chair Tom Strikwerda is seeking better access to private schools, to recruit more scholarship applicants. Members/Chapters, please send Tom info about private schools in your area (tom.strikwerda@verizon.net).
- **New Sanctuary?:** Janet Millenson and Brent Byers, Sanctuary Chair, continue to confer with Mid-Atlantic Builders about accepting land for a potential sanctuary in Piscataway.



Birds of Note

- A EURASIAN COLLARED-DOVE was spotted at the Mason-Dixon Farm's east pond (Frederick Co) on August 1, where hundreds of Mourning Doves lurked in the weeds; it was possibly glimpsed again August 2.
- A juvenile RED KNOT spent several days at Swan Harbor Farm Park, Harford Co, in late August.
- Hart-Miller Island, Baltimore Co, again provided some fine sightings. A RUFF led the parade of 21 species of shorebird on September 3, a day with a record 103 species. On September 17, Hart-Miller recorded its first YELLOW-HEADED BLACKBIRD.
- A light-phase SWAINSON'S HAWK was discovered September 25 at Point Lookout, St. Mary's Co.
- An adult SABINE'S GULL made a brief appearance over the Potomac River, upriver from Violette's Lock in Montgomery Co, on September 26.
- A CLAY-COLORED SPARROW visited Fort McHenry, Baltimore, on September 27.
- In early October a CURLEW SANDPIPER was feeding with other shorebirds at the West Ocean City pond in Worcester Co.

Join Joe Sebastiani for a trip to

Trinidad & Tobago

- March 17-25, 2006 Registration deadline: Dec. 12

Start your nine day tropical adventure on the island of Tobago, where we will stay at the secluded Cuffie River Lodge, nestled in mountain rain forest. Look for the rare White-tailed Sabrewing, Blue-backed Manakin, Yellow-legged Thrush and other Tobago specialties such as Rufous-vented Chachalaca, Ruby Topaz Hummingbird, and Collared Trogon. In addition, we will explore colonies of Red-billed Tropicbird, Red-footed and Brown Boobies, and Sooty and Noddy Terns during an exploration of Little Tobago Island. Next, spend five days at the world-famous Asa Wright Nature Center on the island of Trinidad, home to the world's most accessible colony of the Oilbird, a nocturnal, fruit-eating bird. See Channel-billed Toucans, Bearded Bellbirds, Crested Oropendola and many other species as you relax on the veranda enjoying over 30 tropical species that visit feeders right in front of you. Visit swamps, savannas, and mangrove forest for a wide diversity of bird life as well as beautiful tropical butterflies, reptiles, and wildflowers. To cap off the trip, witness the evening flight of Scarlet Ibis returning to the roost as you cruise mangrove forest and view forested mountains in the background.

TRIP LEADER: Joe Sebastiani, Delaware Nature Society's members programs coordinator
COST: \$2,950 includes round-trip airfare from Philadelphia, lodging at Asa Wright Centre and Cuffie River lodge, all meals, leadership by DNS and local naturalists, and more.

DETAILS: 302-239-2334 • www.delawarenaturesociety.org



DELAWARE
NATURE
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Educating Today, Preserving for Tomorrow

The Birder's Vest

by Rick Sussman



The Overshoe Review

I've been spending so much time at Blue Mash Nature Trail in Montgomery County lately that my green rubber boots had become an essential part of my regular wardrobe, especially in spring and fall when the regular trails hold water and the fields can become quagmires. But towards the end of this summer, those old boots became unbearably hot, so about halfway around the trails I would roll them partway down; weeds and sticks and seeds continually made their way inside, making the boots uncomfortable to wear.

Time to find some replacement footwear, and the perfect solution seemed to be a pair of NEOS (New England Over Shoe, Inc.) overshoes. These are a modern version of the familiar rubber galoshes, with metal buckles up the front, that we wore as kids. Depending on the model, today's overshoes are made of lightweight, waterproof 500-denier nylon, 840 woven polyester, or polyurethane-coated neoprene. For birding purposes, the nylon models offer a perfect balance of weight, comfort, traction, and abrasion resistance. And since you wear them over your regular shoes or boots, you can pretty much wear your most comfortable sneakers or light hiking boots and stay warm and dry all day. You can even wear them over sandals!

Most models have a "perma" outersole of rubber with a hiking-boot-like sole, a rubber toe guard, a wide

top that is easy to step into, and a tongue that is sealed with Velcro® all the way up the front. A snap closure and elastic drawstring seal the top, keeping out the cold and dirt. An adjustable strap with a buckle snugs across the front of your foot to give a perfect fit over any shoes (and most models are snow-shoe-compatible). In cold weather, they are said to add 20°F to everyday footwear; "all-season" nylon models (which are most of the models they make), as well as "dress" models, are rated to 0°F, while insulated models are rated to -10°F.

Optional removable insoles and a carrying case are also available. The boots can easily be folded to fit in a suitcase or backpack, making them ideal for recreational travel or business trips. You could conceivably wear them for an hour of birding in Rock Creek Park before work, then attend a business meeting an hour later without any harm to your shoes.

I bought and field-tested the Voyager model in green (VNN2, suggested retail \$69.99). At 11 inches high, they are shorter than some—other birding-worthy models are 15 to 20 inches high—but the shorter size suits my needs just fine. These boots are guaranteed to be 100-percent waterproof, but with the dry conditions lately I couldn't put this to the test. I did find them to be very comfortable to wear for a good half-day field trip, very easy to put on and take off, and extremely lightweight (2 pounds).

I bought my boots locally at Hudson Trail Outfitters in Rockville for \$64.95. They are carried by ABA sales and Big Pockets birding outfitters through mail order. Or you can log onto the excellent NEOS web site at www.overshoe.com to take a look at the many models—they have them to suit all budgets and needs—and to find a dealer near you or to order direct.

An unsolicited testimonial from Janet Millenson: I directly credit these overboots with adding at least half a dozen "probable" and "confirmed" species to my Atlas list. There are several muddy, mucky, overgrown places in my Atlas block that I would never have explored in my regular boots. Wearing the NEOS, however, I was undeterred by stagnant puddles and waist-high weeds.

One additional point: In hot weather, a significant amount of sweat can condense inside the boots because of their waterproofness. Wearers should be prepared to deal with damp pants legs/shoes afterwards, and be sure to air out the boots until they're thoroughly dry before storing them (it doesn't take long). Also, the high boots offer good protection against thorns, ticks, and poison ivy.

NOTE: Though the name of this column is The Birder's Vest, it will provide reviews on any type of birding gear, whether or not it fits in your vest pocket. This includes clothing, hiking staffs/monopods, cameras, recorders, mosquito gear including perhaps bug sprays, etc. Use your imagination. What would you like to see reviewed? Would you write something about your favorite birding gear for a future column? Send tips, advice, or thoughts to warblerick@aol.com.



Neos Voyager Overboot

2005 MARYLAND/DC LOCALITY LISTS

Each year, the MOS compiles and publishes totals from members' state and local bird lists. The form for submitting your 2005 locality lists is on the reverse. You are invited to submit totals for any of the following categories:

STATE/COUNTY CUMULATIVE LISTS

This category is for lifetime species totals identified anywhere in the state of Maryland, in DC, or within any of the 23 Maryland counties. Please submit only the totals that exceed 50% of the maximum number for each locality. The form contains the latest maximums and the 50% threshold for each locality. If you claim a MD life list in excess of 349 species, you **MUST** list all species added to your MD life list in 2005. If you don't fill in this box on the other side, your list will not be entered into the database.

STATE/COUNTY 2005 ANNUAL LISTS

This category is for total species identified for the same localities as above, but exclusively in 2005. These totals may be reported at any threshold.

YARD LIST

This category is for cumulative yard list totals and for 2005 totals. You may count any species you have identified while in your "yard" (that is, property contiguous to your home). Flyovers and other birds identified from your yard (even if they were not in your yard) also count.

ALL-COUNTY LIST

This category is for the number of species you have identified in every one of Maryland's 23 counties. For example, if you have identified a Northern Mockingbird, an American Crow, a Downy Woodpecker, and a Red-tailed Hawk in each of the 23 Maryland counties, your list total would be 4.

TOTAL TICK LIST

This category is the sum of all your Maryland County list totals. The maximum possible is 7,006. We will accept all-time high submissions at any level greater than or equal to 2,300 (an average of 100 species per county). Total Tick levels for 2005 will be accepted at any level.

ALL-TIME-HIGH ANNUAL LISTS

This category is used to track all-time high annual lists from the current and previous years. Annual totals for prior years may be submitted. For Maryland, submitted totals should equal or exceed 297 (70% of the maximum possible number). For individual counties, totals from previous years should exceed either 50% of the maximum possible or exceed one of the top totals previously published for that county.

SPECIES PHOTOGRAPHED IN MARYLAND

As the name implies, this relatively new category enumerates how many bird species you have photographed (recognizably!) in Maryland. There are no lower limits until we see what sort of responses we get. Perhaps next year we'll set a minimum.

Members' totals that have not been updated within the previous five years (2000-2004) will be dropped from the listings (but not from the database).

Questions??? Contact Norm Saunders at marshhawk@att.net or 301-989-9035.

Please return the form **BEFORE**
January 20, 2006 to:

Norm Saunders
1261 Cavendish Drive,
Colesville, MD 20905-7030

We hope that all who have participated will do so again, and that others will join in, especially those from localities that are currently less than well represented. If you have any comments, thoughts, or anecdotes, please include them. If you have any other categories of Maryland bird lists that are appropriate (for example, all-time or 2005 state/county "Big Day" totals), send them in. We'd like to hear from you. And remember, this is for fun!

—Norm Saunders

MOS 2005 MD/DC LOCALITY LIST REPORTING FORM

Report List Totals as of 12/31/2005

I. PERSONAL INFORMATION

Name:

Address:

City:

County:

State:

Zip:

Email:

Phones: (day): ()

(evening): ()

II. STATE/COUNTY LIFE AND 2005 LISTS

Locality List	Max/50%	Life	2005	Locality List	Max/50%	Life	2005
Maryland State	424/212			District of Columbia	325/163		
MD Yard List	-			DC Yard List	-		
Allegany County	284/142			Howard County	292/146		
Anne Arundel County	333/167			Kent County	302/151		
Baltimore City/County	333/167			Montgomery County	316/158		
Calvert County	305/153			Prince George's County	319/160		
Caroline County	294/147			Queen Anne's County	305/153		
Carroll County	280/140			St. Mary's County	326/163		
Cecil County	296/148			Somerset County	304/152		
Charles County	286/143			Talbot County	315/158		
Dorchester County	319/160			Washington County	262/131		
Frederick County	291/146			Wicomico County	292/146		
Garrett County	277/139			Worcester County	375/188		
Harford County	300/150			All-County List	234/---		
Total Tick	7,006/2,300			Species Photographed in MD	-		

New MD State List Additions in 2005:

(This section MUST be filled in if you are claiming 350 or more species in Maryland)

III. ANNUAL ALL-TIME HIGH LISTS (for years other than 2005)

Locality List	Year	#	Locality List	Year	#

(Please submit one form per person)



Power birders photograph mystery bird, but there was just one small problem. . . . Marcia Balestri informs us that the people who brought us the infamous Frederick County Northern Lapwing, Skip and Lyn Nelson, just returned from a 24-day trip to Bolivia where they saw 549 species, of which 185 were lifers. But they will be forever haunted by an encounter with a small unidentified flycatcher, possibly an undescribed species! We'll never know for sure, since the uncooperative bird allowed photographs only of its back. The Nelsons, pursuing a goal of 2,000 species in 2005, have already made a sweep of the U.S. and northern Europe and will soon be heading to Peru, Ecuador, Argentina, and Chile. We wish them luck, and a better camera angle if they encounter another bird possibly new to science!

Tri-County picnic and travel tales
Carol Broderick wrote in to tell us about the Tri-County Bird Club's fall picnic to kick off the new birding year (Tri-County: Somerset, Wicomico, and Worcester). They started with an encouraging report from Atlas co-coordinator Donald Broderick about the fourth year of atlasing, with an eye to special sightings and problems. Club president Sam Dyke then led a discussion about summer trips. Several club members shared their latest adventures: Betty Pitney told them of her WINGS trip to Arizona. Mike Walsh and Chris Dominick described an impressively-run ABA convention in Phoenix, where Chris got her 500th ABA-area bird, a Scaled Quail. John and Fran Juriga spoke about

traveling to Michigan for the Kirtland's Warbler, Jean and Larry Fry birded in Trinidad/Tobago, and Eric and Patsy Decker spent several "mind-boggling" weeks in Papua New Guinea and Fiji. Some big trips for a little club! The meeting ended with a discussion, led by Carol, on birding ethics and recent events in Maryland that are giving birders a bad reputation. The club would love to have new members; please contact them if you'd like to hang out with this fascinating group.

Barry Miller, published photographer
Jane Cosken dropped us a note to say that Barry Miller, of the Howard County Bird Club, had a full-page photograph of a Resplendent Quetzal on page 101 of the September/October issue of *Bird Watcher's Digest*. That is cool. Very cool. Congratulations, Barry!

A note from the Chapter Chatter Editor:
Listen up, Birdies—
Chapter Chatter isn't gonna fly if you don't send us some words. We're not that picky about submissions. But please don't send us reports about routine bird walks unless something dramatic happened, like a hawk swooping down and snatching someone's toupee. What we'd love to get are news items about noteworthy accomplishments by a chapter or its members, unusual local or foreign birding trips, and interesting bird stories. If you don't help us out, I will be forced to make up wild bird stories, the kind you'd expect to see in *Weekly World News*. So please do your part to keep the *Yellowthroat* a credible and respectable newsletter.
Thank you.

—Shireen
whimbrel@comcast.net

*You are cordially invited
to a reception honoring
Chandler Robbins*

*who will be celebrating 60 years of service
and his retirement from
Patuxent Wildfile Research Center*

*Friday, December 9, 2005
7 pm to 9 pm
National Wildlife Visitor Center
10901 Scarlet Tanager Loop
Laurel, Maryland*

All MOS members and friends are welcome

*For further details, call Jane Fallon
301-497-5664(w) or 301-249-1518(h)*

MINUTES OF THE MOS BOARD MEETING

JUNE 4, 2005

President: Janet Millenson
Vice-President: *absent*
Treasurer: *absent*
Secretary: Janet Shields
Past President: Paul Zucker

Atlas: Walter Ellison
Conference: Janet Shields
Conservation: Maureen Harvey
Investments: *absent*
Long-range Planning: Paul Zucker
Nominations: Al Haury
Research: Gwen Brewer
Sanctuary: Dotty Mumford
Statewide Education Activities: Mike Bowen

Allegany: Gwen Brewer, Barbara Gaffney
Anne Arundel: Al Haury, Dotty Mumford
Baltimore: Brent Byers
Caroline: *not represented*
Carroll: Maureen Harvey, Bob Ringler
Cecil: *not represented*
Frederick: Janet Shields
Harford: Thomas Congersky, Jean Wheeler
Howard: Mary-Jo Betts, Karen Darcy, Tom Strikwerda, Kate Tufts
Kent: Walter Ellison, Nancy Martin
Montgomery: Mike Bowen, Hugh Mahanes, Don Messersmith, Ann Weeks
Patuxent: Fred Fallon
Talbot: *not represented*
Tri-County: *not represented*
Washington: *not represented*

President Janet Millenson called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. and thanked the Howard Bird Club for hosting the meeting at the Recreation & Parks Headquarters, Columbia, MD.

Minutes of the previous meeting were approved.

Treasurer's Report: Emmalyn Holdridge's quarterly Treasurer's Report and the Financial Report for Fiscal Year May 1, 2004-April 30,

2005 were distributed to the board before the meeting. Janet Millenson commented that the style of future annual reports is being changed to a more serviceable form, making them easier to understand.

President's Remarks: Janet Millenson announced that the following positions were filled: Sanctuary, Brent Byers; Publicity, Cecily Nabors. Janet still needs annual reports from a number of the chapters. She would also like a count of the number of field trips given by each chapter this past year. Her goal for the coming year continues to focus on outreach to the chapters, retaining or improving membership, and increasing the enjoyment of MOS members.

PAST ACTION ITEMS

- Board position still needing to be filled: Development.
- Matt Hafner has agreed to be MOS liaison to the Important Bird Areas Program.
- Chapters' feedback is still needed on the idea of a central MOS headquarters location.
- Sanctuary Committee is to draft "wish list" for items to be donated for the sanctuaries. This will be posted in the *Yellowthroat*.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Atlas: Walter Ellison announced that the atlas will again this year be receiving a \$50,000 grant from DNR, with the usual matching volunteer hours required. Over 12,000 volunteer hours were recorded for last year. Because of their continued support, DNR will be listed as a co-sponsor of the Atlas Project. Seven people have offered to do blockbusting. Data review of the atlas program is back on line. Nancy Martin is farming out over 100 miniroutes.

Conference: Janet Shields reported that 220 people registered for the conference. According to evaluations, field trips and the Southern Maryland location were the most

popular parts of the conference. The Silent Auction and Raffle collected \$2,710.50, which is being split between our Atlas Project and the Nanjemoy Environmental Education Center. Tim Gallagher, one of the first people to see the Ivory-billed Woodpecker and author of *The Grail Bird*, will be the keynote speaker for 2006 at Rocky Gap.

Conservation: Maureen Harvey spoke again of the proposed wind power facility in Western Maryland. Rather than 23 towers there will now be 12 larger towers. Anyone interested in hearing dates should contact Maureen.

Investment: Martha Waugh's written report was distributed to board members. Total income is \$63,286.52, and the total portfolio value, currently \$1,387,029, is down.

Long-range Planning: Paul Zucker explained that, during an Executive Council meeting, it was decided to retain the position of Executive Secretary in case of future need. Many of the secretary's duties are now obsolete with the availability of e-mail. Descriptions to be included in the Manual of Operations are needed for Development, Membership, and Youth Programs Committees. Paul will incorporate these changes into the Manual and bring it to the board in September for approval.

Nominations: Al Haury presented members of the Nominations Committee for board approval. The board approved Al Haury, Peter Mann, Mike Bowen, Mary-Jo Betts, and Helen Patton.

Research: Gwen Brewer announced that 9 posters were presented at the MOS conference. One proposal for research funds has been submitted and others are expected.

Sanctuaries: Dotty Mumford gave her last report as Sanctuary Chair. She will continue to play an active role at Irish Grove. Dotty was thanked for over 20 years of service to the board. Brent Byers is taking over as Sanctuary Chair.

Statewide Education Activities: Mike Bowen's new committee will provide opportunities for members throughout the state to learn about birds and go out together to see them. Results from the 58 questionnaires received indicated a strong interest in warbler ID programs in Western Maryland. Owl programs were also popular. A lot of interest was expressed in an ID workshop with an overnight stay and appropriate field trip the next morning.

OLD BUSINESS

Potential Piscataway Sanctuary: Janet Millenson and Brent Byers, new Sanctuary Chair, will be meeting with the developer to obtain further information. Don Messersmith has been atlasing the property and has contacted the Native Plant Society for help in assessing the plant life.

MOS Business Cards: It is not necessary to reprint the MOS card handed out to businesses. A supply was found at the MOS storage area and was made available to the chapters at the board meeting.

Wilson Ornithological Society/ Association of Field Ornithologists Meeting: MOS contributed MOS Checklists, "Yellowbooks," MOS pamphlets, and *MD Birdlife* CDs to the meeting. Because WOS/AFO made money at their meeting, we were asked if we would like to be reimbursed for these items. The board agreed to ask for \$500, which may be used to print new checklists.

NEW BUSINESS

MOS 800 Telephone Number: Because reporters leaving messages on our 800 number during the Northern Lapwing situation were not getting timely responses, Janet Millenson has left her telephone number on the 800 recording. This is for the convenience of reporters working with a deadline.

Checklist of the Birds of MD: The board agreed it is desirable to reprint the checklist and will look into the cost.

Website: Fran Saunders will be retiring from her job in approximately one year and is considering stepping down from managing the MOS website at that time. She is therefore looking for one or two people to train. It would be good to have backup available even if she decides to stay.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

None

NEW ACTION ITEMS

- Annual chapter reports need to be sent to Janet Millenson.
- Paul Zucker still needs write-ups of Development, Youth Programs, and Membership Committees for the Manual of Operations.
- Chapters need EFM letter to present to their members to improve charity campaign access to businesses.
- *Yellowthroat* deadline line is July 25.

President Janet Millenson adjourned the meeting at 11:15 a.m.

Respectfully submitted by
Janet Shields
Secretary

Telling Tales



I was out atlasing, binoculars in hand. A woman who saw me checking the feeders in her yard leaned out the window and told me that I was welcome to come into the yard to look for birds. I soon confirmed nesting flicker, to my delight, and when the woman came outside, I told her about the flicker. "Oh," she said, "a while ago we had a Hepatic Tanager in our yard. We didn't know what it was, so we looked in Sibley, and that was the only thing it could be."

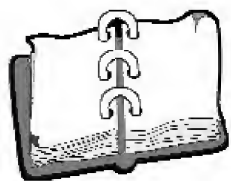
"Hepatic Tanager?" I queried. "But they are only. . . ." She nodded. "On the West coast. But that's what it was." I tried to suggest other possibilities, but she was adamant. It had definitely been a Hepatic Tanager. Then her sister leaned out the window. "Not just one, either, remember. Slews of them."

Slews of Hepatic Tanagers. Wow.

—Cecily Nabors



Eastern Bluebird contemplating dogwood berries.



MOS Calendar

November-December 2005

Tuesday, November 1

Baltimore. Loch Raven. Self-guided walk. First of two early Nov walks. Hike through woods and fields with the opportunity to see many migrants, including Red-breasted Nuthatches, Rusty Blackbirds, Fox Sparrows, Swainson's and Hermit Thrushes. Scope the lake for Bald Eagles and a variety of waterfowl. No designated leader. Meet 8:30 AM. (From Baltimore Beltway north of the city, take exit 27, Dulany Valley Rd, north several miles, cross large bridge over reservoir and bear right immediately. Continue to first left, Stone Hill Rd. Go about 100 yards, turn around, and park on the right. [All cars need to park on the same side of the road.]) Coordinator: Paul Noell, 410-243-2652 or myconut@msn.com.

MEETING. **Baltimore.** "Seasons at the Fort" with *Jim Peters*. Jim single-handedly took on the project of turning the urban wetlands of Ft. McHenry into a micro-habitat for resident and migrating birds. Jim will share his six years' experience of monitoring birds at Ft. McHenry. 7:30 PM. Cylburn Arboretum, 4915 Greenspring Ave. Info: Pete Webb, 410-486-1217 or pete_webb@juno.com.

Wednesday, November 2

MEETING. **Carroll.** Program TBA. 7:30 PM. Senior Center, 125 Stoner Ave, Westminster. Info: Tammy Schwaab, 410-857-4913.

Thursday, November 3

MEETING. **Frederick.** *Art Kennell* will give a photographic presentation on "Backyard Birding." 7 PM. C. Burr Artz Library, Frederick.

Friday, November 4

MEETING. **Harford.** Speaker TBA. Dinner at 6:15 PM followed by presentation at 7 PM. Churchville Presbyterian Church, MD 22 and

MD 136. Info and dinner reservations: Rick Cheicante, 410-803-2712.

MEETING. **Anne Arundel.** "Extinct and Endangered Species in the Bahamas" by *Tony White*. 8 PM. Arlington Echo Outdoor Education Center, 975 Indian Landing Rd, Millersville.

Washington. Observe Saw-whet Owl banding at Lambs Knoll. Meet 9:15 PM at Boonsboro P&R. Limited to 14. Call 301-797-8454 for info.

Saturday, November 5

Montgomery. Blue Mash Nature Trail. Half day. Looking for hawks, sparrows, and other woodland edge species. Trip may cover area around Rte 108 and Riggs Rd, so carpooling may be necessary. Waterproof boots essential. Meet at 7:30 AM at Zion Rd parking lot. Call leader for reservations and directions. Limit 8. Leader: Rick Sussman, 301-774-1185.

Anne Arundel. Flag Ponds Nature Park, Calvert Co. Full day. Looking for wintering birds in this 545-acre park. Depart from the Parole P&R at 7:30 AM. Bring a lunch. Leader: Nick Nicholson, 410-721-4814.

Carroll. Waggoner's Gap, PA. Hawk migration. Come for all or part of the day. Meet 8 AM at Westminster Town Mall (formerly Cranberry Mall) by the big mall sign near Rte 140. Info: Bill Ellis, 410-781-7113.

Howard. Alpha Ridge Park and Landfill. Meet 8 AM at the park. Moderate to difficult walking through the fields, looking for sparrows and early winter arrivals. Landfill may host rarities. Boots recommended. Leader: Ralph Cullison, 410-442-2181.

H Indicates Field Trip

Baltimore. Loch Raven Walk. Similar to Nov 1 trip. Leader: Kevin Graff, 410-557-2456 or ocean_city2001@yahoo.com.

Patuxent. Fran Uhler NA. Meet 7:30 AM at the end of Lemon Bridge Rd off MD 197, just north of Bowie State U and the MARC line. No reservations required.

Harford. Mariner Point Park. Nestled between the Gunpowder marsh and the slow waters of Foster Branch, the varied habitats and paved trails of this park make for good birding and a comfortable walk. Meet leaders Tom Congersky and Randy Robertson near the pavilion at the back parking lot at 7:30 AM. Call 410-658-4137 for details.

ANNUAL BANQUET. **Allegany.** Keynote Speakers: *David and Maureen Harvey*, who will describe a recent trip to Algonquin Provincial Park. Banquet starts at 5:30 PM at the Frostburg United Methodist Church Social Hall, 48 Main St, Frostburg. Call Charlotte Folk at 301-689-6587 to make reservations. Call Charlotte or Barbara Gaffney at 301-895-4646 for info. Cost for the dinner is \$13 (students \$10), which includes tax and gratuities. Please send payment to Charlotte Folk at 179 Mt. Pleasant St, Frostburg, MD 21532.

Saturday-Sunday, November 5-6

Frederick. Town Hill Overnight. Stay at a local B&B on Saturday and visit the famous (in Maryland, anyway) hawkwatch. Possible Northern Goshawks and Golden Eagles. Meet 10 AM at Baker Park on November 6. Info and reservations: Dave Smith, 410-549-7082.

Sunday, November 6

Howard. Centennial Park. 2-3 hrs. Meet 8 AM at west end parking lot. Easy walking on paved path around Centennial Lake. Woodlands, fields, and water host a variety of species. Great view of the sky for flyovers. Early waterfowl, lingering migrants likely. Leader: Joe Byrnes, 410-730-5329.

Talbot. Wye Island. Land and waterbirds. Breakfast host: Carol Yates. Meet 7 AM Tred Avon Shopping Center parking lot in front of Acme, Easton. Leader: Danny Poet, 410-827-8651 or danny poet@hotmail.com.

Kent. Blackwater NWR and Elliott Island. An all-day trip in search of waterfowl and other south-Dorchester Co specialties. Meet 7 AM at Dollar General parking lot, Chestertown. Leaders: Walter Ellison, 410-778-9568, and Peter Mann, 410-648-5205.

Tuesday, November 8

MEETING. Kent. "Landscaping with Native Plants" by *Sylvan Kaufman*. 7:30 PM. Wesley Hall, Heron Point, E. Campus Ave, Chestertown. For info contact Nancy Martin, 410-778-9568, or Peter Mann, 410-648-5205.

Thursday, November 10

MEETING. Talbot. "Birds of Prime Hook" by *Susan Talbot*, Regional Wildlife Biologist based at Prime Hook NWR. If you haven't visited Prime Hook NWR recently, this is a great way to find out what you have been missing. 7:30 PM. Easton Welcome Center (upstairs), South Harrison St, Easton.

MEETING. Howard. "Birds and Bats of Brazil," by *George Jett and Gwen Brewer*. Explore the diversity of western Brazil through photographs from a 12-day, 500-mile trip down the Amazon and its tributaries. Hospitality and club bookstore 7:30 PM; meeting/program 8 PM at Howard County Rec & Parks, 7210 Oakland Mills Rd, Columbia. Info: Jeff Friedhoffer, 410-997-5336.

Friday-Sunday, November 11-13

Allegany. Irish Grove Sanctuary. Gwen Brewer will lead us to points in and around the Irish Grove MOS Sanctuary in Somerset Co. Vast marshes in this area can be productive for waterfowl, rails, and other marsh birds. Target birds include Sedge Wren, Short-eared Owl, and

big numbers of Myrtle Warblers. This trip may include some forays into Worcester Co to help with the "Rarity Roundup." Info: Barbara Gaffney at 301-895-4646.

Sunday, November 13

Cecil. Avalon Seawatch. Meet at Big Elk Mall parking lot 7 AM. Leader: Richard Donham, donhamr@zoominternet.net.

Talbot. Chesapeake Bay Environmental Center. Waterfowl and woodland species. Depart 7 AM Tred Avon Shopping Center parking lot in front of Acme, Easton. Alternately, depart 7:30 AM Prime Outlets, Queenstown, in front of L.L. Bean. Leader: Danny Poet, 410-827-8651, danny poet@hotmail.com. Breakfast hosts: Margaret and Erney Maher.

Howard. Centennial Park. 2-3 hours. Easy walking on paved path around Centennial Lake. Woodlands, fields, and water host a wide variety of species. Great view of the sky for flyovers. Meet 8 AM west end parking lot. Facilities available. Leader TBA.

Wednesday, November 16

Washington. Search for owls starting at 5 AM. Contact Dave Weesner, 301-432-7718, for starting location.

Harford. Susquehanna SP. Return trip to this lush riverside park for a leisurely fall stroll. Highlights should include good looks at riverside waterfowl and winter songbirds. Meet 8 AM at the mouth of the Deer Creek rail bridge pull-off on Stafford Rd. Leader: Les Eastman, 410-734-6969.

MEETING. Montgomery. *Bob Mumford* will present "Natural Kenya," a photographic tour of four national parks. Photos will feature mammals as well as birds, including weavers, hornbills, and barbets. You'll also see the only snake the photographer has found in Africa, a huge puff adder. 7:30 PM. Potomac Presbyterian Church, 10301 River Rd, Potomac.

Thursday, November 17

MEETING. Caroline. *Andi Pupke*, Education/Outreach Director, Chesapeake Wildlife Heritage, will present "What CWH Does for Bird Habitat." 7:30 PM. Caroline Co Public Library, 100 Market St, Denton.

Saturday, November 19

Montgomery. Black Hill RP. Half day. Waterfowl and land birds. Meet at Visitor Center 8 AM. Bring scope and snacks. Reservations not required. Leader: Rick Sussman, 301-774-1185.

Frederick. Point Lookout and environs. Possible Kelp Gull, Brown-headed Nuthatch, Red-headed Woodpecker, waterfowl, and late migrants. Bring your lunch and meet at Urbana P&R South, 6 AM. Info: Marcia Balestri, 301-473-5098.

Anne Arundel. Sandy Point SP. Half day. Gulls, waterfowl, wintering birds, possible Snow Bunting. Depart 8 AM from the Bay 50 Shopping Center parking lot, White Hall Rd. Leader: Hal Wierenga, 410-647-7439.

Baltimore. Saturday Monitoring Walks at Ft. McHenry. A continuing survey of bird activity at the Fort. Meet 8 AM at the Visitor Center. Cancelled in bad weather (high winds, fog, rain, snow). From Baltimore Beltway southwest of the city, take exit 11, I-95, north. Get off at exit 55, Hanover St. Turn east (right) on McComas St, north (left) on Key Hwy. First left at Lawrence St and left onto Fort Avenue; continue through gateway into the park. Leader: Jim Peters, 410-429-0966.

Baltimore. Blackwater NWR. Full-day trip to see ducks, thousands of Canada and Snow Geese. Possible Bald Eagle and Brown-headed Nuthatch. Meet 9:30 AM at Refuge Visitor Center. From Bay Bridge, go south on US 50 to Cambridge. Right (south) on Rte 16 (Church Creek Rd), about 7 miles, left (east) on Rte 335,

MOS Calendar (continued from page 15)

about 5 miles, left on Key Wallace Dr about one mile. No reservations necessary. Bring lunch. Leaders: Peter Lev, 410-823-2962 or plev@comcast.net (morning), and Kevin Graff, ocean_city2001@yahoo.com (afternoon).

H Harford. Love Rd (NE Harford County). Leisurely stroll along quiet and scenic county road. Meet 7:30 AM at the High's store at the corner of Rte 1 and MD 161. Leader: Russ Kovach, 443-386-4787.

H Carroll. Hashawha. 2 hrs. Evening bird walk sponsored by Bear Branch/Hashawha Environmental Center. Join staff for their monthly stroll through the fields and forested areas of the park. Not appropriate for children under 10. Bring binos and field guide. Meet 4 PM at Bear Branch Nature Center, located on John Owings Rd, Westminster. Fee: \$2/members; \$4/nonmembers.

H Patuxent. Governor Bridge Park. Meet 7:30 AM at the parking lot for Governor Bridge Park. No reservations are required. Park is located on Governor Bridge Rd, approximately 1 mile east of MD 301.

H Howard. Howard Waterfowl Search. 8 AM to 2 PM. Meet at Broken Land Pkwy parking lot at Lake Elkhorn. Plan to visit Columbia area lakes to search for gulls, ducks, grebes, loons, and other waterfowl. Easy walking. Plan to carpool. Bring lunch and drinks. Scopes helpful. Facilities available. Leader: Jane Coskren, 410-381-7344.

H Tri-County. Bombay Hook NWR. Full day. Wintering waterfowl. Possible Ross's and Cackling Goose. Meet 7:30 AM at Asbury United Methodist Church (east parking lot adjacent to Wesley Dr), Salisbury. Leader: Betty Pitney, 410-543-1853.

Sunday, November 20

H Anne Arundel. Blackwater NWR. Full day. Migrating and wintering waterfowl. Depart 8 AM from the Bay 50 Shopping Center parking lot,

White Hall Rd. Bring a lunch. Leader: Bobbi Reichwein, 410-451-2671.

H Carroll. Eastern Neck NWR. Joint trip with the Kent County Bird Club. Anything's a possibility, so come for the whole or part of the day. Bring lunch. Meet 7 AM at the I-70/Rte 32 P&R. For more info, contact trip co-leader Bob Ringler, 410-549-6031.

H Kent. Kent County. Waterfowl focus, with a careful search for rare geese among the commoners. Meet 9 AM at Dollar General parking lot (the old A&P, off Philosopher's Terrace), Chestertown. Leaders: Walter Ellison and Nancy Martin, 410-778-9568 or rossgull@baybroadband.net and Peter Mann, 410-648-5205 or pmann@epl-inc.com.

H Talbot. Wades Point Inn. Winter residents of fields, woodlands, and water. Depart 7 AM St. Michaels Village Shopping Center parking lot adjacent to Talbot Bank, St. Michaels. Leader: Les Roslund, 410-763-8169, lroslund@bluecrab.org. Breakfast hosts: George and Margie Steffens.

H Howard. Centennial Park. 2-3 hours. Easy walking on paved path around Centennial Lake. Woodlands, fields, and water host a wide variety of species. Great view of the sky for flyovers. Meet 8 AM west end parking lot. Facilities available. Leaders: Kevin Heffernan, 410-418-8731 and Karen Darcy, 410-552-9342.

Tuesday, November 22

MEETING. **Washington.** *Dave Weesner* will present "Owls in MD." Mt. Aetna Nature Center. 7:30 PM. Call 301-797-8454 for info.

Saturday, November 26

H Carroll. Piney Run Park. Migrating waterfowl. Meet 8 AM at the park's entrance gate on Martz Rd, Sykesville. Leader: Bob Ringler, 410-549-6031.

H Harford. Conowingo Eagle Watch. Conowingo is one of the best locations for mid-Atlantic eagle watching, as dozens of eagles flock to this hydroelectric fish cuisinart. Also possible: Peregrine Falcon, northern gulls, and Golden Eagle. Scopes helpful. Meet 8 AM at Fisherman's Park at the bottom (east end) of Shures Landing Rd. Leader: Dennis Kirkwood, 410-692-5905.

H Cecil. Eagles at Conowingo Dam. Half day. Meet 8 AM at Fisherman's Park at Conowingo Dam. Leaders: Charlie Gant and Sean McCandless, seanmccandless1@comcast.net.

Sunday, November 27

H Talbot. Easton WWTP. Depart 7 AM Tred Avon Shopping Center parking lot in front of Acme, Easton. Leader: Terry Allen, 410-822-8132. Breakfast hosts: Joan and Les Coble.

H Howard. Centennial Park. 2-3 hours. Easy walking on paved path around Centennial Lake. Woodlands, fields, and water host a wide variety of species. Great view of the sky for flyovers. Meet 8 AM west end parking lot. Facilities available. Leader: Jeff Friedhoffer, 410-997-5366.

Monday, November 28

MEETING. **Tri-County.** "Birding the Bering Sea—Adak Island" by *Sam Dyke*. 7 PM. Asbury United Methodist Church, Camden Ave, Salisbury.

Thursday, December 1

CHRISTMAS DINNER/MEETING. **Frederick.** *Hank Kaestner* will regale us with more tales in "50 Years, 40 Spices, and 6,700 Species of Birds: What a Life!" Meet at Homewood at Crumland Farm. Non-alcoholic punch 6 PM, dinner 6:30 PM. Reservations and payment required by Nov 20. Contact Nancy Parker, 301-663-1909 or dparker905@adelphia.net.

Friday, December 2

MEETING. **Anne Arundel.** "Shade-grown Coffee and Birds" by *Dr. Russ Greenberg*. 8 PM. Arlington Echo Outdoor Education Center, 975 Indian Landing Rd, Millersville. Info: George and Linda Thomas, 410-647-5082.

Saturday, December 3

STATE BOARDING MEETING. 10 AM. Hosted by the Harford chapter. Location TBA.

Baltimore. Horsehead Wetlands Center and Terrapin Nature Park. Winter waterfowl and passerines at Horsehead, different waterfowl and passerines at Terrapin Park. Meet 7:30 AM at Nursery Rd P&R off Baltimore Beltway exit 8 or at the Chesapeake Environmental Center (Horsehead) parking lot 8:30 AM. Entrance fee waived for card-carrying MOS and BBC members. Leader: Kevin Graff, ocean_city2001@yahoo.com. Coordinator: Pete Webb, 410-486-1217 or pete_webb@juno.com.

Frederick. Eastern Shore. Gary Smyle will take us to all the hot spots to look for winter specialties: eiders, Harlequin Duck, Snow Goose, and others. Bring a lunch. Meet 6 AM at the Rte 75 P&R, just south of I-70. Contact: Gary Smyle, 301-663-0055.

Harford. MD and DE Shore. This full-day adventure visits some of Delmarva's birding mega-hot spots in search of early winter waifs and northern strays. Target birds include Northern Gannet, eiders, Harlequin Duck, Purple Sandpiper, Snowy Owl, Great Cormorant, and Brown-headed Nuthatch. Bring lunch and warm, comfortable clothing. Meet 6:30 AM at MD 155 and I-95 P&R. Leader: Russ Kovach, 443-386-4787.

Montgomery. Black Hill RP. Half day. We'll concentrate on identifying wintering water birds at excellent local lake and look at land birds, too. A joint MBC/ANS trip. Reservations required. Leader: Bill Elliott, 240-361-3175.

Patuxent. Fran Uhler NA. Meet 7:30 AM at the end of Lemon Bridge Rd off MD 197, just north of Bowie State U. and the MARC line. No reservations required.

Howard. Blackwater NWR. All day. We will bird from the Choptank River Bridge before going to the refuge. Targeting waterfowl and wintering raptors, with the likelihood of Rough-legged hawk and Short-eared Owl. The spectacle of huge flocks of Snow and Canada Geese is worth the trip. Meet 6:30 AM at Rte 32/Broken Land Pkwy P&R north. Pack lunch, snacks, and beverages. Scopes useful. Facilities at some stops. Leader: Stan Arnold, 410-768-0155 or 410-428-7567.

Sunday, December 4

Cecil. Waterfowl, loons, and grebes of Cecil County. Half day. Meet 9 AM at Dunkin' Donuts parking lot area, Big Elk Mall, Elkton. Leader: Marcia Watson-Whitmyre, mwww@udel.edu.

Montgomery. Blue Mash. Half day. Interesting walk at a very birdy site. Waterproof footwear essential. Meet 7:30 AM at Zion Rd parking lot. Call leader for reservations and directions. This trip is limited to 8-10 participants. Leader: Rick Sussman, 301-774-1185.

Tuesday, December 6

MEETING. **Baltimore.** "Telling Bird Tales." BBC members, come prepared to relate your most interesting or memorable bird sighting or story. Everyone will have 4 minutes to tell their tale. 7:30 PM. Cylburn Arboretum, 4915 Greenspring Ave. Info: Pete Webb, 410-486-1217 or pete_webb@juno.com.

Wednesday, December 7

Carroll. Hashawha. 2 hrs. Morning bird walk sponsored by Bear Branch/Hashawha Environmental Center. Join staff for monthly bird walk through the forest, wetlands, and meadows. Beginning birders are welcome. Not appropriate for children under 10. Bring binos and field guide. Meet 9 AM at Bear

Branch Nature Center located on John Owings Rd, Westminster. Fee: \$1/members; \$2/non-members.

MEETING. **Carroll.** *Pete Marra* will discuss "Neighborhood Nestwatch: Science in the City." 7:30 PM. Senior Center, Stoner Ave, Westminster. Contact: Tammy Schwaab, 410-857-4913.

Thursday, December 8

MEETING. **Talbot.** Spring Planning Meeting and Potluck Dessert. Bring a good dessert and some ideas for the spring season. 7:30 PM. 6800 Thorneton Rd. Host: Jean Crump.

MEETING. **Howard.** "Establishing Wildlife Habitat on Residential Property," by *Daryl Dutrow*. Tired of mowing your lawn? Consider a wildlife-friendly landscape using native plants to attract birds, butterflies, and other helpful insects. Hospitality and club bookstore 7:30 PM: meeting/program 8 PM. Howard County Rec and Parks, 7210 Oakland Mills Rd, Columbia. Info: Jeff Friedhoffer, 410-997-5336.

Saturday, December 10

Anne Arundel. Greenbury Point. Half day. Greenbury Point is probably the last stronghold in AA County for Bobwhite. Also, wintering land birds and waterfowl. Depart 8 AM from the Bay 50 Shopping Center parking lot, White Hall Rd. Leader: Doug Forsell, 410-626-8486.

Sunday, December 11

Harford. Macton Rd (NE Harford County). Leisurely stroll along quiet and scenic county road. Meet 7:30 AM at Dublin Market at the intersection of MD 136 and MD 440. Leaders: Dave Webb and Colleen Webster. Contact 410-939-3537 for more info.


MOS Calendar (continued from page 17)

Tuesday, December 13


MEETING. **Kent.** "Shorebirding with Elderhostel" by *Glenn and Juli Dulmage*. 7:30 PM. Wesley Hall, Heron Point, E. Campus Ave, Chestertown. For info, contact Nancy Martin, 410-778-9568, or Peter Mann, 410-648-5205.

Saturday, December 17

CHRISTMAS COUNT. **Allegany.**
CHRISTMAS COUNT. **Oakland.**
CHRISTMAS COUNT. **Baltimore Harbor.**
CHRISTMAS COUNT. **Caroline.**
CHRISTMAS COUNT. **Triadelphia.**
CHRISTMAS COUNT. **Washington, DC.**

 **Baltimore.** Saturday Monitoring Walks at Fort McHenry. Meet 8 AM. See Nov 19 listing. Leader: Jim Peters, 410-429-0966.

Sunday, December 18

 **Anne Arundel.** Eastern Neck NWR. Full day. Eastern Neck's 2,285 acres includes 1,000 acres of brackish tidal marsh, 600 acres of crop land, 500 acres of forest, 100 acres of grasslands, and 40 acres of open water impoundments. Depart 8 AM from the Bay 50 Shopping Center parking lot, White Hall Rd. Bring a lunch. Leader: Bobbi Reichwein, 410-451-2671.

CHRISTMAS COUNT. **Elkton**
CHRISTMAS COUNT. **Lower Kent.**
CHRISTMAS COUNT. **Port Tobacco.**
CHRISTMAS COUNT. **Catoctin Mountain.**
CHRISTMAS COUNT. **St. Michaels.**
CHRISTMAS COUNT. **Salisbury.**
CHRISTMAS COUNT. **Seneca.**
CHRISTMAS COUNT. **Jug Bay.**

Wednesday, December 21

MEETING. **Montgomery.** "Trinidad and Tobago—Land of the Hummingbird," by *Bill Murphy*. Join former Maryland birder Bill Murphy on a natural history excursion to the emerald isles of Trinidad and Tobago. Everything from Scarlet Ibis to Violaceous Trogon and so many more are easy to see. Bill has conducted more than 50 birding tours to T&T. 7:30 PM. Potomac Presbyterian Church, 10301 River Rd, Potomac.

Monday, December 26

CHRISTMAS COUNT. **Blackwater/Southern Dorchester County.**

Tuesday, December 27

CHRISTMAS COUNT. **Crisfield.**
CHRISTMAS COUNT. **Point Lookout.**
CHRISTMAS COUNT. **Washington County.**

Wednesday, December 28

CHRISTMAS COUNT. **Ocean City.**
CHRISTMAS COUNT. **Central Loudoun.**

Thursday, December 29


CHRISTMAS COUNT. **Chincoteague.**


Friday, December 30


CHRISTMAS COUNT. **Harford/Rock Run.**
CHRISTMAS COUNT. **Cape Charles.**

Sunday, January 1

CHRISTMAS COUNT. **Patuxent River.**
CHRISTMAS COUNT. **Fort Belvoir.**
CHRISTMAS COUNT. **Annapolis/Gibson Island.**

 **Baltimore.** Loch Raven Reservoir. Meet 8:30 AM. Varied habitats including woods, fields, and reservoir. Likely birds are Red-breasted Nuthatch, Bald Eagle, sparrows, thrushes, and waterfowl. (Directions: see Nov 1.) Leader: Kevin Graff, 410-557-2456 or ocean_city2001@yahoo.com.

 **Montgomery.** Earliest Bird Walk: Georgetown Reservoir and DC Hot Spots. Half day. Start the New Year right. Everyone welcome. Meet 8 AM at Georgetown Reservoir, NW DC, by the gate leading to the dike between the pools. Reservations not required. Leader: Mike Bowen, 301-530-5764.

 **Howard.** Start Your 2006 List. Half day. Plan to carpool to different locations to find as many species as possible. The one day of the year where every bird is new! Meet 8 AM at boat ramp of Centennial Lake. Expect moderate walking. Possibility of lunch stop, depending on the weather. Facilities at some spots. Leader: Bonnie Ott, 410-461-3361.


Monday, January 2

CHRISTMAS COUNT. **Sugarloaf Mountain.**
CHRISTMAS COUNT. **Bowie.**

Thursday, January 5

MEETING. **Frederick.** *Bob Balestri* will report on our excellent 2005 club trip to Panama. 7 PM. Community Room, C. Burr Artz Library, Frederick. Contact Marcia Balestri, 301-473-5098, for additional info.


Thursday-Saturday, January 5-7

 **Montgomery.** Gull Workshop. Meet Jan 5, 7:30 PM at Cyndie Loeper's house for light fare and a gull slide presentation by *Clive Harris*. Then join Mike Bowen for the associated field trip on Jan 7. All are welcome for either or both sessions. Call Cyndie for directions, field trip details, and required reservations, 301-530-8226.

Friday, January 6

MEETING. **Anne Arundel.** "Rails, Waterbirds, and Other Birds of Jug Bay" by *Chris Swarth*. 8 PM. Arlington Echo Outdoor Education Center, 975 Indian Landing Rd, Millersville. Info: Dotty Mumford, 410-849-8336.

Saturday, January 7

 **Anne Arundel.** Downs Park. Half day. This park, located on the Chesapeake Bay, offers opportunities to see both wintering waterfowl and land birds. Depart 8 AM from the Jones Station P&R. There may be a \$5 fee per car to enter the park. Leader: Pat Tate, 410-266-5669.

MIDWINTER COUNT. **Frederick.** Audrey Carroll Audubon Sanctuary. Meet 6:30 AM at the Sanctuary. Dress warmly, with waterproof boots. Contact: David Smith, 410-549-7082.

ANNUAL HOLIDAY PARTY. Carroll. Once again hosted by Splinter and Sue Yingling. If you've never attended, now's the time to start. Everyone has a good time. 7:30 PM until ? For more info and to coordinate your potluck dish, contact Sue Yingling at 410-876-8211.

Kent. Eastern Neck NWR. Kick off your birding year with a half-day trip for waterfowl and winter land birds. Meet 8 AM at Dollar General parking lot (the old A&P, off Philosopher's Terrace), Chestertown. Leaders: Walter Ellison and Nancy Martin, 410-778-9568 or rossgull@baybroadband.net and Peter Mann, 410-648-5205 or pmann@epl-inc.com.

Sunday, January 8

COVERED DISH DINNER. Baltimore. Bykota Center, Towson. 5 PM. *Hank Kaestner*, world traveler and bird-watcher extraordinaire, will present the "2005 Edition of Birdwatching Adventures around the World." Reservations/directions/food dish coordination: Shirley Geddes, 410-377-6583.

Tri-County. MD/DE Coast. Full day. Search the coast for winter specialties and perhaps a rarity from the CBC. Meet 7:30 AM at Asbury United Methodist Church (east parking lot adjacent to Wesley Dr), Salisbury. Leader: Sam Dyke, 410-742-5497.

Montgomery. Blue Mash. Half day. Interesting walk at a very birdy site. Waterproof footwear essential. Meet 7:30 AM at Zion Rd parking lot. Call leader for reservations and directions. This trip is limited to 8-10 participants. Leader: Rick Sussman, 301-774-1185.

Tuesday, January 10

MEETING. Allegany. Come watch the new *Watching Sparrows* DVD. The video contains good footage of several species of sparrows that occur in North America. 7 PM. Main Library, 31 Washington St, Cumberland.

Thursday, January 12

Washington. Winter birding by car. Contact: Bob Keedy, 301-733-7708.

Friday, January 13

MEETING. Harford. *Hank Kaestner*, back by popular demand, will present his "2005 Birdwatcher's Odyssey." 7 PM. Churchville Presbyterian Church, MD 22 and MD 136. Light refreshments will be served. Info: Rick Cheicante, 410-803-2712.

Friday-Monday, January 13-16

Montgomery. Outer Banks of North Carolina. Three days. Wintering ducks, geese, swans, shorebirds, loons, and gannets. Search also for less common gulls and a variety of wintering land birds. Call leader for motel and trip info. Reservations required. Tentative limit: 12. Leaders: Frank Witebsky, 301-871-7990, and Cyndie Loeper, 301-530-8226.

Saturday, January 14

MIDWINTER COUNT. Carroll. Count birds in your backyard, in your neighborhood, or at your favorite birding spot in Carroll County. All input welcome and important to the bird club. Please coordinate locations with Bill Ellis at 410-781-7113. Join the Tally Rally at the home of Bill and Pat Ellis at 5 PM. RSVP to the Ellises at 410-781-7113. Food or \$ donation, please.

Sunday, January 15

MIDWINTER COUNT. Frederick. Fred Archibald. Meet 6:30 AM at the Sanctuary. Dress warmly, with waterproof boots. Contact: Bob Schaefer, 301-831-5660, rjs30@erols.com.

Conference Pin Contest

Artists are invited to enter the 2006 MOS Conference Pin Design Contest. The deadline is January 16. The basic rules are simple: Entrants must be members of MOS, and the design must depict a bird appropriate for the conference site (Rocky Gap) and incorporate the phrases "MOS" and "2006." The back of each entry should carry the artist's name, address, and chapter affiliation, and identify the species represented. The pin can be any shape. To see all the rules, check the MOS web site or contact me at 301-977-5788 or smudgie@comcast.net. Send entries to me at 10205 Kindly Court, Montgomery Village, MD 20886.

—John Malcolm

Summer Camp Scholarships

Each year MOS awards 10 or so scholarships to send teachers, park rangers, and other persons who work with young people to week-long summer camps conducted by the Audubon Society. Scholarships cover all expenses except travel. Detailed information is available on the web site or in the September/October issue of the *Yellowthroat*. **Applications for the 2006 workshops are due by January 31, 2006.** Please direct questions and submit applications to

Tom Strikwerda
9806 Culver Ct
Kensington, MD 20895
301-942-2841
tom.strikwerda@verizon.net

CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNTS

Saturday, December 17

Allegany County. Compiler: J.B. Churchill, 301-6971223. Tally at the Frostburg United Methodist Church Social Hall, 48 W. Main St. at 7 PM. Bring a covered dish to share.

Oakland/Garrett County. Compiler: Connie Skipper, 301-387-5227, connieskipper@hohnet.com

Baltimore Harbor. Compiler: Peter Webb, 410-486-1217, pete_webb@juno.com (home, after 6:30pm and weekends) and pew@niroinc.com (work, 8:30 AM to 5 PM, M-F). Tally rally at Gene Scarpulla's.

Denton/Caroline County. Compiler: Steve Westre, 410-479-0338.

Triadelphia. Compilers: Jay and Diane Jones, 301-670-0516, jayrjones@juno.com. Novices and experienced birders welcome. Tally follows catered buffet at Meadowsider on Muncaster Mill Rd, Derwood.

Washington, DC. Compiler: Larry Cartwright. To sign on, call the Audubon Naturalist Society, 301-652-9188, x 10.

Sunday, December 18

Elkton. Compiler: Laura Balascio, 302-456-0914.

Lower Kent County. Compiler: Paul Toulson, 410-778-4123. Full day followed by countdown at the Chestertown library.

Port Tobacco. Compiler: Gwen Brewer, 301-843-3524.

Catoctin Mountain. Compiler: Mike Welch, 301-874-5828 or mdjvwelch@aol.com. All eyes and ears needed. Tally Rally at the Smyles'; call Gary Smyle, 301-663-0055, for directions.

St. Michaels. Compilers: Shirley Bailey, Frank Lawlor, Wayne Bell, 410-820-6002. Compilation dinner in St. Michaels, location TBA.

Salisbury/Tri-County. Compiler: Sam Dyke, 410-742-5497. Take a break from the holiday rush and join this traditional birding event.

Seneca. Compiler: Mark England, 301-253-4139 or mbengland@mail.com.

Jug Bay. Compiler: Sam Droege (Laurel), 301-390-7759 (h) or 301-497-5840 (o); sam_droege@usgs.gov.

Monday, December 26

Blackwater/Southern Dorchester County. Compiler: Chan Robbins, 301-725-1176 or chan_robbins@usgs.gov.

Tuesday, December 27

Crisfield. Compiler: Charles Vaughn, 410-742-7221 or essc@comcast.net

Point Lookout. Compiler: Bob Boxwell, 410-394-1300.

Washington County. Count and Tally Rally. Compiler: Dave Weesner, 301-432-7718.

Wednesday, December 28

Ocean City. Compiler: Jay Sheppard, 301-725-5559 or JMSheppar@aol.com.

Central Loudoun Co, VA. (This count includes a few miles along the C&O Canal in MD near White's Ferry.) Compiler: Joe Coleman, 540-554-2542 or jandkcoleman@erols.com.

Thursday, December 29

Chincoteague. Compiler: Richard Roberts, bandbird@verizon.net.

Friday, December 30

Harford/Rock Run. Compiler: Jean Wheeler, 410-879-7424 or jswheeler44@msn.com.

Cape Charles. Compiler: Harry Armistead, 215-248-4120 or 74077.3176@compuserv.com.

Sunday, January 1

Patuxent River. St. Mary's area coordinator: Doug Lister, 301-342-3670 (w) or 301-994-2582 (h). Calvert area coordinator: Andy Brown, 410-535-5327.

Fort Belvoir, VA. MD area coordinator: Carol Ghebelian, 301-753-6754.

Annapolis/Gibson Island. Compilers: Sue Ricciardi, 410-647-9513 or susier@starpower.net; Hal Wierenga and Lynn Davidson, 410-647-7439.

Monday, January 2

Sugarloaf Mountain. Montgomery County compiler: Janet Millenson, 301-983-9337 or janet@twocrows.com. Frederick County compiler: Helen Horrocks, 301-831-6315 or hlh_37@yahoo.com.

Bowie. Compiler: Fred Fallon, 301-249-1518.

POSTMASTER: TIME-DATED MATERIAL—PLEASE EXPEDITE!

LAST CALL

...for **Research Proposals.**

Applications for grants for ornithological research in the state of Maryland are due by December 1. Notification of awards (generally not exceeding \$2,000) will be made in about 8 weeks. For application guidelines and info, contact Gwen Brewer, glbrewer@comcast.net.

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